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LETTERS OF JAMES RUMSEY, INVENTOR OF THE STEAMBOAT

(Concluded)

(G.)

TO ALL TO WHOM these Presents shall come Edward Bancroft of Francis Street in the County of Middlesex, Esquire James Allan Park of Carey Street in the said County Esquire and Robert Barnewell of the City of London Merchant send greeting.

WHEREAS by a certain Bond or Obligation bearing date the twentieth day of February in the present year one thousand seven hundred and ninety five Joseph Barnes of the State of Virginia in North America Gentleman then residing in the City of London Executor of the last Will and Testament of James Rumsey late of the Parish of Saint Margaret Westminister Engineer deceased became held and firmly bound to Daniel Parker of Water Town in the State of Massachusetts in America then residing in Charles Street Soho Square in the County of Middlesex Esquire in the penal Sum of five thousand pounds—subject to a condition thereunder written for making the same void Reciting that by a certain Bond or Obligation in writing bearing date on or about the first Day of May then last past the above named Joseph Barnes became bound to the above named Daniel Parker in the penal Sum of five thousand pounds with a condition thereunder written whereby after reciting that disputes had arisen between the said Joseph Barnes and Daniel Parker and in order to put an end to the same they had agreed to refer the same to the award of the above named Edward Bancroft James Allan Park and Robert Barnewall or any two of them it was theby [sic] conditioned to make void the same if the said Joseph Barnes should keep the award and determination of the said Edward Bancroft James Allan Park and Robert Barnewall or any two of them of and concerning all and all manner of action and actions cause and causes of Action suits bills bonds specialties covenants contracts promises accounts reckonings Sums of Money

Judgments executions extents quarrels controversies trespasses damages and demands whatsoever both in Law and Equity at any time theretofore had made moved bought commenced sued prosecuted committed or depending by or between the said parties or either of them so as the said award and Arbitrators or any two of them should be made in Writing under the hands and seals of them or any two of them ready to be delivered to the said parties in difference or such of them as should desire the same on or before the first Day of November then next and then last past and reciting that the said Arbitrators had proceeded to take upon themselves the burthen of the said Referrence and examine the parties and their Accounts papers and vouchers relating to the matters referred to them but did not make their Award within the time limitted by the said recited Bond and it was agreed between the said Joseph Barnes and Daniel Parker to refer again to the award and Determination of the said Edward Bancroft James Allan Park and Robert Barnewall or any two of them the matters before referred to them by the said recited Bond The condition of the said Bond or Obligation now in recital was that if the said Joseph Barnes his Heirs Executors or Administrators did and should for his and their parts and behalf in all things well and truly stand to obey abide by perform fulfil and keep the award order arbitrament final end and determination of the said Edward Bancroft James Allan Park and Robert Barnewall or any two of them of and concerning all and all manner of action and actions suit and suits cause and causes of action and suit bills bonds specialties covenants contracts promises accounts reckonings Sums of Money Judgments executions extents quarrells controversies trespasses damages and demands what soever both in Law and Equity at any time theretofore had made moved brought commenced sued prosecuted committed or depending by or between the said parties so as the said Award of the said arbitrators or any two of them be made in writing under their Hands and seals ready to be delivered to the said parties in difference or such of them as should require the same on or before the twentieth Day of April next then the Obligation should be void or else should be and remain in full force and virtue And it was thereby agreed by and between the said parties that the said Bond or Obligation and the submis-

sion thereby made should be made a Rule of His Majesty's Court of King's Bench at Westminster if the said Court should so please AND WHEREAS by a certain other bond or obligation bearing even date with the above recited Bond the said Daniel Parker became held and firmly bound to the above named Joseph Barnes in the penal Sum of five thousand pounds with a Condition thereunder written for making the same void if the said Joseph Barnes as Executor aforesaid should and did observe perform fulfil and keep the Award Order and Determination of the said Edward Bancroft James Allan Park and Robert Barnewall of and concerning the matters therby referred (being the same matters mentioned and contained in the said herein before recitd Bond) AND WHEREAS the said Edward Bancroft James Allan Park and Robert Barnewall have further taken upon themselves the said Referrence and have examined and interrogated the said parties and Witnesses and examined and inspected several Books Papers and Accounts respecting the same and heard and considered what was alledged on both sides NOW KNOW YE that we the said Edward Bancroft James Allan Park and Robert Barnewall do therefore hereby award order and direct that the said Joseph Barnes as Executor as aforesaid and Daniel Parker or one of them shall and do out of the Copartnership Estate and Effects of Daniel Parker James Rumsey and Samuel Rogers well and truly pay or cause to be paid unto the Reverend Edward Wadeson of Huntingdon at the House of Messrs Roberts Curtis and Company Bankers in Cornhill London between the hours of ten and eleven of the Clock in the forenoon on the twentieth Day of April next ensuing the principle Money and Interest then due to him under or by virtue of a certain Bond or Obligation on the same Bond or Obligation being thereupon delivered up by him to be cancelled and destroyed (being the same Sum of Money awarded and directed by us to be paid to him by Samuel Rogers and Joseph Barnes as Executors as aforesaid in and by a certain other award order and Direction under our Hands and Seals bearing even date herewith and made in pursuance of a certain bond or obligation bearing even date with the above recited Bond And we do further order and direct that the said Joseph Barnes do and shall out of the assets of the said James Rumsey which have or

shall come to his Hands well and truly pay or cause to be paid unto the said Daniel Parker his Executors Administrators or assigns the Sum of two hundred and eighty four pounds ten shillings and six pence of lawful Money of Great Britain and that upon payment of the said Daniel Parker and the said Joseph Barnes as Executor as aforesaid shall do well and truly enter into and execute to each other a good and sufficient release in Law of all Claims and Demands whatsoever under and by virtue of certain Articles of Agreement bearing Date the twenty fifth Day of March one thousand seven hundred and ninety made between the said James Rumsey of the first part the said Samuel Rogers of the second part and the said Daniel Parker of the third part and of certain Indenture bearing even date therewith and made between the said James Rumsey of the first part the said Samuel Rogers and Daniel Parker of the second part and Samuel Browne of the third part or any other Account whatsoever from the beginning of the World to the Day of the date of these presents and we do further hereby award adjudge order and direct that the said Daniel Parker shall and do pay two third parts or proportions of the Costs Charges and Expences of making and executing this Award And that the said Joseph Barnes shall and do pay the remaining third part thereof out of the Effects of the said James Rumsey which shall come to the Hands of the said Joseph Barnes IN WITNESS whereof the said Edward Bancroft James Allan Park and Robert Barnewall have hereunto set their Hands and Seals the ninth Day of March in the Year of our Lord one thousand seven hundred and ninety five.

Edwd Bancroft (LS.)
James Allan Park (LS.)
Robt Barnewall (LS.)

Sealed and delivered being
first duly stamped in the
presence of
Rich Dann Jr.
Threadneedle Street
London
18th August 1796 Examined with the original
(of which it is a true Copy) by us

William H. White Clerks to Wadeson & Hardy
S. F. Townsend Austin Friars London

[backed] Dated 9th Day of Mar. 1795.

Joseph Barnes Gent.
with
Daniel Parker, Esqr } Award

(H)

London March 30th 1792.

Dear Charles.

In november Last I received your Several Letters dated at Shepherds town in July 91 and on the 27th day of december I received you letter of 22^d of nov^r 91 written at philadelphia. I Sincerely thank you for the kind concern you express, throgh the whole of them, for my past misfortunes, and future wellfare, and trust that you will believe, that I have your interest and happiness as much at heart, as you have that of mine. you Seem to be frightened at the nature and complication of my affairs, and was no doubt more so when you received the Letter forwarded to you for Mr West in nov^r last; but do not Let these things make you any longer uneasy, they are but the natural occurrences, that all men in my line of life may expect to meet with, especially in a City that may (not unjustly) be called the capotal of the world; of course pocessed with a great proportion of all the knowledge thereof, without much of its Virtue, on which account it is Soon determined after a man is broght upon this theatre whether he is fit for an actor or not; I have So far passed muster, tho the part I have had assigned me as yet has been Such as (only) to keep me in view Rather than to make me Conspecueous and notwithstanding my discouragement has been great indeed, from the difficulties that have Constantly been heaped upon me yet I do not Loose heart, finding that "my back is always equal to the burthen that

I have to bear"!!! and therefore (thogh unhappy enough) am not in so miserable a Situation as you Seem to fear; my unhapiness is only at intervals when my philpsophy and fortitude forsakes me, which is not oftener now, not withstanding the turbulance and magnitude of my persuits; than when my greatest want, was a grist of your indian Corn without having the money to pay for it!!! After So long a preface your mind will in Some degree be prepared for any kind of news, I Shall therefore not hesitate to Say at once, that my affairs at this moment are not in a more favourable train, than when I wrote you last, which has been the true Cause of my remaining So long Silent, hopeing every week that Came (for Some months past) would put me into possession of the means of being independent, at least in this land of exile, which would lead to my turning my Eyes (once more) towards my own Country; but alass my weried patience must brace up, to face another long long year, before I can even hope for that pleasure. Then (and not before) you may expect me!!! as I have determined by that time to force my business here to an end of some kind or other; It might with certainty (Should I live) be a prosperous end, had not all my conections here as well as my one [vaunted?] *patrons,* in america, been *Laches,* instead of *Liberal disinterested men.* Charactors, by the by that have no existance, except in Idea! of honest men, there may be many; I know there is Some!!! my Steam Vessel, from the poverty of the Concern, has laid by the walls, nearly, for the last six months, not withstanding that Very little work (besides repair of damages recevd by laying by) would make her ready for an experiment; that would not fail of Success, that would entitle me to receive from my partners £2,500 Ster^rg^. But what of that Success? if they have not the ability and inclination to pay me, they already owe me, for the new mills that I have Compleated, upwards of £3,000 Sterl^rg^ yet not a farthing of it is to be had, promises and prospects of receiveing a Considerable part of it is always before me, but the *means* for *maturing* them never appears. Thus you See (as throgh all my life) I am obliged to live on *hope,* almost, alone: which at this moment is but very faint as it has become quite uncertain wheithe the business (which is now but feebly carried on) must not in the Course of a few days once more Stop!

for want of Supplies of money to carry it on; how it my be is uncertain, yet Certain it is, that a few days must bring Changes of Some sort, as I am determined to proceed [torn] short time longer, without something Substantial Should Come down; for like all projectors I have, resourses in other Schemes, which I this day expect to obtain a *patent* for, that will be put into the hands of persons for execution whose Situation will respect to money matters will make their efforts (to bring my new plans forward) much more efectual, than ours [?] has been in bringing forward the old ones:

I am very sorry that trade proves So dull with you but don't let that discourage you, Something will turn up as advantages, or it will revive: I wish you Could Sell your property, goods and all; for a good farm, for after all is Said and done I am Satisfied it is the most Comfortable life to be a Contented farmer! It is in that way I hope to end my days! Remember me kindly to all my friends, particularly to my sister, who is so much interested in my hapiness; and but * * * that I remain your Sincere and much obliged friend &

Hum. Servt.

James Rumsey.

		Sh for^{d}	15 Cents
Geo. Toun 4th June		Alexr	10
			—
[backed]			25

Capt. Charles Morrow
Shepherds town
Berkeley County
Virginia

Capt. McKensey
Ship Mary

Letter from James
Rumsey filed in suit
936

(I)

London august 4th 1789.

Dear Charles,

I have your letters of the 16th & 17th of march 89 by Mr Hunter, and that of the 17th of May by Capt Suttan from philadelphia now before me, and be eshored that it gives me great pleasure to hear that you, my sister, and all friends are well, those by Mr Hunter I received the last week in June, that by Capt Sutton are the 12th of July, my reply will be tedious and not Satisfactory but before I Enter into a particular account of the dificulties I have Lately met with I will tell you that I have Concluded after mature Consideration not to Send out the goods proposed before next Spring, the principle reasons for not doing it follow,—you remember I long Since informed of a gentleman that was so good as to offer me money to try my Experiment and that I had a Vessel building at Dover for that purpose, she is now finished and is at London what is still better she is paid for, the hull Cables and anchors and trunk in her bottom Cost 600 guinies; you will be frightened when I tell you that after I had entered into an agreemt for this vessel an had subjected myself to be drawn upon at very short periods for the money, I returned to London where to my great astonishment I found my friend and patron in *Jail* for a Large Sum of Money, I had just received a remittance from the Society about Suficiant to make the first payment for the Vessel which unfortunately was lodged with him, with the greatest dificulty, and more address than I everbefore was Capable of, I got it out of his hands, Contrary to the Expectation of Every one that knew the Circumstances; by which I was Enabled to make the first payment, my Situation was now such that I was obliged to Close with the first person that would Let me have money, a good natured honest Creature that knew no more of my Schemes than an *Idiot,* proposed to Lend me some money, I accepted of it and got £500 of him, from two other gentlemen I got £200, more and was going on tolerable well when a partner of my honest friend returned from abroad, pretended to be much dissatisfied with the money being gone without having Some considerable part of the Scheme for it, we had a meeting in order to try to Contract for part of my british

patent but Could not agree, they offered me £1200 Sterling for one fifth of it; my reasons for not Closeing with them when in so bad a Situation, ware many, they then pushed for their money which obliged me to apply to the Very gentlemen throgh home I intended to get the goods; for the lone of that Sum they ware good enough not only to let me have that Sum but as much more as will finish my Experiment the Cost of which will be at least one thousand guinies, this you will say is a great deal of money for me to borrow in a strange Country Especially when the Society that Sent me here has actually, in one Sence of the word deserted me having fairly refused thogh not in direct terms, to Establish a Credit here for me to try the Experiment these letters from the Society I have Shewn to the Gentlemen that has let me have the money. The Society words are "if the Experiment you are about suceeds you will send us out an Engine for a twenty ton boat by Capt Sutton; the Cost of which they will pay to your order at our next meeting the Society will take in Consideration a proposition that has been made to them, for Establishing a Credit in London for Such Engines and mechines as they may want!" I will leave you to Comment upon what they have said but I Conceive I am to get no Creditt Except the Experiment Succeeds, I have written them a Spirited Letter in which I toald them as this Experiment would be at my own risk, that I Expected all the profits (should any arise) of that vessel. I hope under these circumstances that you will approve of my not asking for the goods, not that I think thay would have been refused me but it would have had so much the appearance of straining[?] the free horse, that I had not resolution enough to do it besides was my misfortune to happen in the Experiment I should feel a double weight upon me by the takeing the goods for should they take up the Idea that my Scheme would fail it might raise in them Some suspitions of the uprightness of my intentions. The foregoing dificulties at times bare harder on me than any you ever knew me to Encounter in america the reason was their is no * * * of a payment here one single day therefore the failing in one payment would have made me a *bankrupt* and my name must have been (to the great Satisfaction of my Enemies) posted up in the public papers, or myself sent to *Jail,* after what I have said

it is unnecessary to add any reasons for the delay of the Experiment to so late a period, the mecheniry is now on board the vessel and is going slowly together, *I remain quite Sanguine,* she is a butifull vessel Burthen 101 & 45/94 tons I have called the *Columbian Maid* but think to change it to the *Rumseian Experiment* as soon as success is ascertained. I am much obliged to you for [illegible] with your [illegible] for my Success, it is Certainly my friend a great undertaking to attempt Such an Experiment as mine is under the Eyes of one *million* of Souls I did not at first intend to do it, but Several attempts are makeing in different parts of the kingdom to work Vessels by Steam thogh not on my plan I am therefore determined to let the world know the general principles of mine as Soon as posable, that I may thereby gain their Support and patronage, it is necessary in a country like this where almost anything Can be accomplished by *Bribery* and as shore as I have success, I shall have powerfull opponants, and althogh I have (untill now) kept it as Private as possible yet I have Secured several powerfull friends to introduce me to the Lords of the admorality &c. as soon as my Vessel is ready the Duke of Clarance, the kings third son, has been informed of it, and is much pleased with the account, several of the nobility and Sir Joseph Banks (*president of the royal Society*) are ready to tender me Every servise in theire power, my plans has been approved of in the royal academie of Sciences in paris and by the Society of the museum of arts and Sciences, in the Same place, where throgh the interest of the Marquis de Candorset[?] and Some others of my friends their, I am propossed as a member of that Society. It takes Some time to go throgh the necessary Ceremonies, but Supose I shall be Elected Doc. Franklin is at present the only one upon that list that is an american, no person can be admited that has not produced some new philosophical discovery; So much my friend for the gratification of Vanity, the Substance I find is much harder to come at yet I hope it will all Come about in due time. respecting setting up a boat in Patamock I shall not forget that object the moment I have it in my power to attend to it.—as to my returning home, it is the only thing that Distresses me to a great degree, for if I stay to do my business (and consequently my duty) in Europe it will take a long time, and to leave

it undone would be to Surrender to others the fruit of my labours, as well as a great proportion of the reputation I might gain by being the Establisher of them; these Considerations, and a wish to return to my native Country "and to the bosome of my friends" keeps as it ware, a Continuel warfare within my mind which renders me quite unable to determine on Either measure as yet. I am astonished at Fitches perseverance and rascallity I wish you had got him taken with a writ, however upon the hole I think his Exertion [?] will opperate against him. I hope that Mr Barnes has been able to Colect and pay you the money I owed you I have frequently written to him upon the Subject and shall do it again at this time. The unaccountable number of letters I have dayly to write persons in this & other Countries will I hope plead my excuse to my father and the rest of my relations and friend for not writeing Individually to them, Especially as I depend upon you to Communicate to Each the Contents of my letters so far as may be prudent an you think they would be glad to hear. I have not heard a word of Mr Vasey Since he left London last year. The people of france will be a free people, they are following the Steps of the americans who taught the world the Value of Liberty, this City is Crowded with french tories that has made thire Escape from their Justly Enraged Country men, the popularity of the marquis DeLafayette and his Close Intimacy with our Countryman Mr Jefferson, makes him (Mr Jeferson) as it ware the present *dictator* or *law giver* to the french nation, the historyes of the world Can not furnish such an other Instance, there has indeed been tyrants that has ordered the Chains of Slavery to be rivited on as many people, but an american is the first that attempts to have them taken off. I lived to see that dread full place called the *Bastile* it is now no more, but leveled to the Earth by the Candidates for Liberty, —You have not toald me how the navigation of Potamack goes on, and whether richi Stuart [h]as yet the Command of that business I should also be glad to hear if the Sawmill is like to make a liveing that is tolorable for my poor old father and his Children that are there if it does I am Satisfied, your not mentioning it has gave me Some reason to doubt of their Success. I have my uneasiness on many other accounts about which I am realy afraid to Enquire; if any person

has been injured or disapointed by me, I am sorry for it, the only Comfort I have when such gloomy thoughts, occupy the mind is the being Concious that I never wished to injure one of my fellow Creatures who did not deserve it, and that I always did things for the best, what Ever might have been the Event.

Doct^{r} McMechen has written to me I am Sorry to hear that he is in so poor a way I wish I was able to relieve him. [torn] is singular (but I can ashore you my friend that It is true) that I never felt more affliction, for the misfortunes of my friends and those dependent upon me, than I ever [did?] upon my own account. I shall Endeavour throgh [torn] Barnes to give him some assistance. David gray [torn] is maried; if you see him tell him I [torn] posable hapiness, and for his own sake [torn] he did not Come to Europe as it not [torn] Can Colect Idea^{s} which will add much to [torn] this life, whatever it may do to his knowledge —I should be glad to hear about the play house, Fitzhughs houses, Wm Orrick & his afairs &c &c &c. after my best respects to you & your relations and to my Sister, and mine with Sincerity Subscribe myself yours & their Efectionate freind

James Rumsey.

[backed]

Capt. Charles Morrow
Shepherds Town
Berkley County
Virginia

To the particular Care of
Mr Hellen

Mr Morrow will please
to puruse this and returne
it to me again

C. M.

McMachen
vs
Rumsey

Letter

Philad. Jan. 29th 1792.

Capt. Charles Morrow

Dear Sir,

These lines will be handed you by Adam Fraley, a young man who came recommended to me by Jacob Smith as an ingenious Mechanic, he is professionally a mill wright and is to execute the work of Major Hights mill upon the principles of reaction, in which are to be two Machines, I have given him assurances of patronage, on my receiveing a satisfactory advice of the completion and Success of Said mills; the essential parts of the aparatus are to be made here—

The Committee of Congress appointed to bring in a Bill to amend the Patent system, have not yet made report! however, they promise me it shall soon appear; From what Little I can discover, the report of Said Committee will not meet my Ideas but I will attend to its passage through the Low house, and if it shall be deficient get my friend to amend it. Nor has the Committee of the Rumseian Society appointed to take a retrospect of their constitution &c. yet made report—

The 16th instant I recd a Letter from our friend J. Rumsey dated London Nov. 3d 1791— In which his apology for not having so long written to me is, his not having had matter of importance to inform me. No important event had taken place, he is passive on the Subject of the Steam Vessel; he observes that his partners have for some time payed up their quotas of the expenses, but he fears there is but little probability of getting any of the purchase money 'till the Machines shall be made productive and yield it; he adds that his difficulties were much Lightened, but in consequence of his having then got any Machine in motion which was productive, not entirely removed.

He, further adds that the hopes of the Rumseian Society here must in future depend on their Liberality, because in his Last Patent, dated Augt 24, 1791—he has specified mills and Engines so far superior to any of his former as to render them comparatively of but Little value; In consequence of which he requests the mill proposed at New York to be Suspended 'till he forwards an improved Machine for that purpose.

He further adds, that he was on the point of trying a mill on principles entirely new, of the result of which his next in a few days should inform me.

He observes, that, he used to think he was more unfortunate than others because he met with more impositions from his fellow men, but, almost too Late, he finds the truth to be his own credulity in, and want of a competent knowledge of menkind, which he observes the City of London an excellent school to teach.

He, informs me he had not since Buel Left London rec[d] a Line from him, which together with Some disagreeable things which he has since heard of him is Sufficient ground to Suspect he (Mr. Rumsey) is once more deceived, however Mr. Rumsey observes if the result shall be, that Buel had not acted with propriety or has done any thing contrary to Mr. Rumsey interest he will make America too warm for the [torn] of Buels views?

with the purest motives
of respect
I am Sir
your hum. ser[t]
Joseph Barnes

Capt C. Morrow

P. S.

Best respects to M[rs] Morrow and Love to children particularly Little polly for whom I feel sensible emotions.
Likewise respects to M[r] Rumsey, & friends,

J. B.

[backed]

Capt. Charles Morrow
Shepherds Town
Berkely County
Virginia

M W
Adam Fraley

McMachen
vs
Rumsey

Letter.